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THE "LIBERAL CATHOLIC"

R. L. BRUCKBERGER

DEATH OF A COLLABORATOR

LULU VARGAS-VILA
JOHN FREDERICK NIMS

july 11

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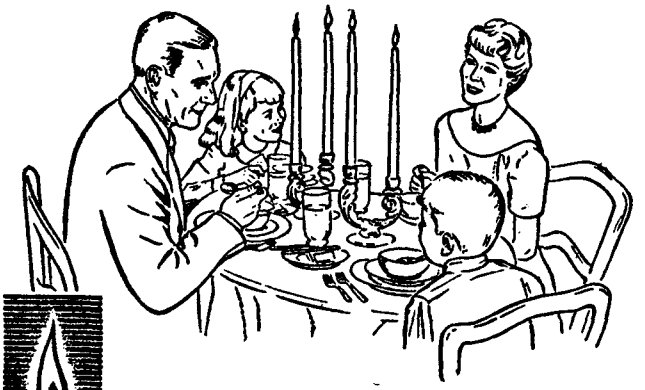

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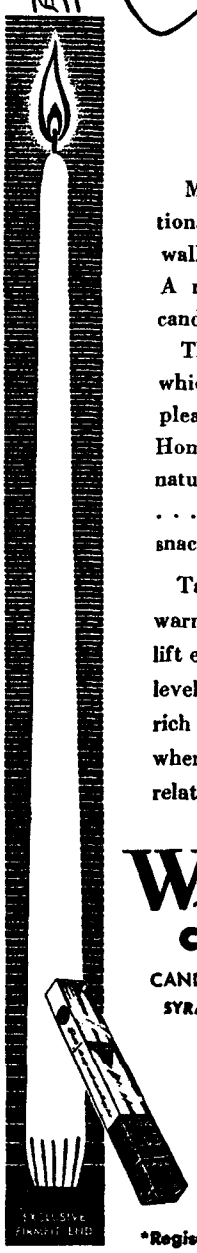

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THE Commonweal

week by week

"THE NEED FOR A CHANGE"

WHEN the Presidential campaign began to open up after the turn of the year, there were signs that the American people wanted a change before all else. Today, after returns from the primaries, several straw votes and countless words from leading contenders in both parties, the desire for change is less certain. But twenty years in office does not do a political party any good; it grows lax and careless, complacent in the thought that its thousands of entrenched retainers provide a guarantee of its continuance.

The undeniable advantage in a change of hands was pointed up in a series of revelations of venality and incompetence in office by various investigating committees in recent months. The Truman administration has included among its appointees a number of men who consciously, or because of their lack of ability, have betrayed the public trust; its greatest fault is its refusal to clean house.

As if this were not enough to motivate hostile public sentiment, there are the burdens imposed by the state of the world in which we live: the costly, bloody and inconclusive war in Korea, unprecedented taxes on businesses and individuals, inflation, controls, the march of Communism, the billions going for unappreciated foreign aid, etc. This is a sorry world, and it helps to blame our troubles on the politicians. Then, if we can "throw the rascals out," the burdens will be inevitably lifted from our straining backs. It is remarkable how many citizens, without any ideas as to what the magic formulae of a new and less demanding administration would be, are imbued with just such sentiments.

Yet, in spite of everything, the Republicans do not appear to be overly confident. And there must be something more than the Dewey and Willkie defeats to explain their doubts and fears. Even the power and efficiency of incumbent local and state political machines will not explain it, for the election will be decided by the large and unpredictable group of marginal and independent voters.

The basic reason for resistance to a major political change is the essential soundness of the principles enunciated by Harry S. Truman. Time and again he has taken principled stands sure to lose the Democrats some votes. Yet paradoxically, and although implementation has often been lacking, the President's unpopular actions have gone into the making of a record of basic policies that is so imposing that it hamstrings the opposition.

MR. TRUMAN has stood his ground on the matter of Civil Rights legislation; he is firmly convinced that there is no place for second-class citizenship in our American democracy. Also, at whatever immediate political cost to himself and his party, he has successfully defended federal ownership of off-shore oil reserves—to be utilized for the benefit of the nation as a whole—against the attempts of the three contiguous states to take them over for their own benefit. He has consistently supported the cause of the American worker and encouraged his assuming a responsible role in the development here of a genuine industrial democracy. President Truman has given strong backing to the Department of Agriculture with its emphasis on soil conservation and to other means of preserving and developing our natural resources.

Mr. Truman has long recognized the menace of Communism. He accepted the challenge and ordered a stand at the 38th parallel two years ago. He has consistently demanded adequate appropriations for armament and for substantial economic and military aid for our allies. In this he has encountered terrific opposition, yet ironically the verdict of history may be that, even so, Mr. Truman failed to ask for enough. To supply these vital global expenditures he has insisted on higher taxes (when the economy can best afford it) and on economic controls to prevent runaway inflation. All this is a token of his statesmanship.

Moreover, the long-range Point Four program for the undeveloped areas of the world has had no stronger advocate than President Truman. He has also recognized other obligations which prosperous America has toward the needy peoples of the world.

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His (unsustained) veto of the restrictive McCarran-Walter immigration bill indicated a genuine awareness of our responsibilities before the world; his veto message itself was an inspiring appeal to Christian social principles.

This is the record that is to be on the line next November. It will take a lot to outmatch it. Even after twenty years a change is not necessarily desirable for its own sake. Unless it is a change to something realistically and clearly better, the American people would do well not to make a shift this time. Such is the challenge the Truman record presents to the Republicans here and now.

STATE DEPARTMENT FANTASIES

WHEN the news of a State Department ban on all foreign travel for Professor Owen J. Lattimore was announced in front-page stories, it seemed that Senator Joseph McCarthy had, perhaps, achieved a major vindication. The situation sounded as ominous as it was mysterious. The man whom the Wisconsin Senator had denounced as the number-one Soviet agent in the United States was planning a secret visit to Moscow, the story went, and the State Department, acting on information of this, had taken the steps necessary to prevent his leaving the country. The source of its information? It was not disclosed. But a spokesman for the Department assured the press that State "does not act on fantasies and inanities."

The implication that there was much more here than met the eye was almost inescapable. Reminded that the State Department does not act on inanities, many could not help but suspect that some real evidence of Mr. Lattimore's disloyalty had been uncovered. Senator McCarthy, appearing on a television debate, rejoiced in the bolting of the door before his villain could escape. Typically, he refused the State Department any credit for belated wisdom. Lattimore's detention, he said, was the work of the Justice Department, and to it alone belonged the credit. The nation waited for something big, and scandalous, to break.

When it broke, it was big and scandalous all right, but not in quite the way that Senator McCarthy, and the American public, had expected. Despite its assurances to the contrary, the State Department *had* acted "on fantasies and inanities." Investigation disclosed that the information upon which it had taken a far-reaching step against Mr. Lattimore was "wholly unfounded." It was, moreover, a cocktail party item, born, the unhappy informer claimed, of a few too many drinks. The State Department made an elaborate public apology to Mr. Lattimore. Mr. Lattimore seized the occasion for a wounded and righteous denunciation of the role of the informer in American society. The informer himself was indicted for knowingly supplying the government with false information.

The whole episode has the flavor of low comedy farce, and the men in the Kremlin must find the situation very funny indeed. Americans' enjoyment of the all-around burlesque must be vitiated, however, by their shock at our having reached the point when such a thing could happen. They probably would not agree with Senator Wayne Morse's intemperate demand that Secretary of State Acheson resign as a result of this affair, but they must admit that the episode demonstrates how far we have traveled down the road of denunciation and fear.

Mr. Lattimore's version of himself as the persecuted and misunderstood scholar-patriot is open to serious question upon the basis of his own record and words. But it is a far jump from this questioning to the as yet unsubstantiated charges of espionage and treason which have been made against him. The McCarthy-McCarran axis may operate on the guilty-until-proved-innocent assumption, but the majority of Americans still adhere to a more generous hypothesis.

Whatever may be one's doubts concerning Professor Lattimore's judgment or credibility, we cannot apply to him or to any other American the arbitrary and anonymous restrictions of the police state.

NEXT WEEK

REP. JACOB K. JAVITS (R., N. Y.), reviews Roland N. Stromberg's *Republicanism Reappraised.*

"There is an enormous potential in international trade stimulated through the development of their underdeveloped areas and the vast increase of their productivity, especially in scarce war materials. There is also the enormous potential for participation by United States technicians in the development of the free world—with vast opportunities for the men and women so engaged without in any way encouraging colonialism or an extensive overseas civil service. There is, too, the whole problem of regional organization for security and economic development in areas like the Far East where the Democratic Administration has singularly failed. . . ."

MARGARINE ON SALE IN N. Y.

FOR many citizens, yellow oleomargarine is indistinguishable from butter. Food experts hold that the two spreads are equally nourishing; yet

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margarine retails for about half the price of butter, no mean saving for a hard-pressed family budget week after week. For decades American dairy interests have battened on the protection of state laws forbidding the sale of yellow margarine. In recent years these interests have happily been fighting a losing battle; the public is winning out. When the state of New York put the cheaper commodity on sale for the first time in sixty-six years, July 1, butter still held legal sway in but seven strong dairy states.

Yet yellow oleo's New York debut was tightly cribbed and shackled. Local restaurants have to pay an annual licensing fee to serve it; they must prominently display a sign with the legend, "margarine served here." Then, so that the customer will not mistake it, they must label each individual patty, "margarine," or serve it in a triangular shape. Maximum penalty for violation is a year in prison.

Public interest in enforcement will hardly be as lively as that of local butter and egg men, who have set up an Information Bureau on Margarine Control. What is particularly disquieting to these long-protected entrepreneurs is that distributors of margarine present it as a dairy product, although skim milk accounts for but one-sixth of its content. The background for this good news for the New York breadwinner is a story of years of restrictive legislation when "free enterprise" was supposed to be in the saddle.

HORATIO ALGER IN COLLEGE

THE Horatio Alger story of rags to riches is firmly embedded in American thinking. We cherish the idea that any farm boy can aspire to the Presidency of the United States, and we have Harry Truman as living proof of the fact that there is really some truth in the old saw. We feel that the office-boy who has not tried the president's chair for size is not worth his salt, and to give some backing to this tradition every service-club luncheon has its quota of former office-boys who have risen in the business hierarchy.

Yet, despite such evidences to the contrary, equality of opportunity for all becomes harder rather than easier to attain. The United States probably comes closer to achieving this ideal than any country of comparable size in history. But the older we get and the more our social patterns tend to solidify, the more difficult it becomes to preserve the social mobility which has always been one of our distinguishing marks. The truth is that even in this country equality of opportunity remains an ideal, rather than an accomplished fact.

One major obstacle in the way of an equal chance for all involves the question of access to educational opportunity. Rightly or wrongly, a college education is today considered an almost indispensable prerequisite for a successful career in one's chosen occupation, and many fields are permanently barred to those who lack such training. Yet all over the country the children of lower-income families have little chance to enroll in college, regardless of their abilities.

As a college education assumes increasing importance, not having a chance to get such education adds up in fact to lifetime inequality of opportunity. Since the children of well-to-do parents can almost always attend college, even if they have only moderate abilities, this situation smacks too much of hereditary privilege for comfort.

All this helps to explain the importance of a student aid bill recently transmitted to Congress at the request of the President by Oscar R. Ewing. The purpose of the bill in question is to extend economic aid to some of those young people who are today prevented by economic reasons from attending college. To achieve this, Congress was asked to provide funds for scholarships of up to $800 for the most gifted of those financially unable to attend.

Present plans call for government assistance to fifty or sixty thousand students a year. Those who qualify would be able to borrow from the educational institutions themselves sums as high as $600 annually for four years. Eighty per cent of these loans would be insured by the government. Students would be selected on the basis of ability by State scholarship commissions. Federal influence in selecting students would be specifically forbidden, and scholarship-winners would be allowed to attend colleges of their own choosing.

If one examines the situation only from the point of view of national need, it is obvious that the talents which are now going to waste for lack of training represent potential national assets of the highest order. If in addition to this one considers the benefits a program like this could bring to the individuals concerned, the advantages of such a measure mount up.

In actual fact, passage of a measure such as the one now proposed would be only one step in the direction of equality of educational opportunity for all. More than the cost of tuition keeps the children of lower-income families out of college. Oftentimes the wages such young people can earn are essential for the family budget. In such cases even winning a scholarship will not enable them to go to college, regardless of their abilities. But for many, a scholar-

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ship of this nature would make all the difference between college and no college at all.

It is safe to predict that this proposal will produce cries of horror from those who dread the prospect of Federal action in still another area of American life. The name of Federal Security Administrator Oscar Ewing will undoubtedly contribute to the fury of the onslaughts on the new bill, since Mr. Ewing has become something of a symbol of hated Federal intervention. But we think the proposed measure should receive serious consideration.

In this day and age insuring equality of opportunity is not as simple as it once was, but we should not let that fact discourage us. The American ideal of equality of opportunity for all is a noble one. Perhaps we shall never completely achieve it, but we should never stop trying.

MIDSUMMER MADNESS

BEFORE some kind of compromise on a control bill was arrived at, the House recently presented the nation with a sad picture of irresponsibility. Acting in a mad rush and harried on all sides by lobbyists and pressure groups opposed to all forms of economic controls, the House showed a dismaying readiness to throw out most of the already weak checks on inflation.

As it turned out, all was not lost. A delay was necessary in order to try to reconcile the differences between the House version and the bill passed by the Senate, and happily by that time protests from voters all over the country had begun to reach the Representatives. The joint bill which resulted after the Congressmen had time to think it over is a long way from ideal; effective controls are apparently doomed to die one by one. But the relief with which the measure was finally greeted by groups intent on saving controls gave a good indication of how bad the original House measure really was.

It is time for Congress to take a long and serious look at where we are going. Ever since the Korean war began, the country has suffered from the lack of adequate measures to control inflation. This failure has damaged the defense effort and has clipped substantial sums from the wages of people who cannot afford such pruning.

The nation has to make sacrifices in keeping with the extent of the peril we face. But such sacrifices should be equitably distributed. They should not be allowed to fall heaviest on those who can least afford it. It is sheer madness for legislators to imagine that labor will sit by and see inflation gobble up wages without taking steps, up to and including strikes, in order to increase take-home pay.

Congress cannot itself act in an irresponsible fashion and then solemnly call on others to take the long view and act with moderation. A defense economy demands effective controls and material allocations. When the hurly-burly of the political conventions and the fall election is over, Congress should see to it that we get them.

MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN ALLIES

WHEN the appointment of Andrei Gromyko as Soviet Ambassador to the Court of St. James was announced, the press was filled with speculation on its possible meanings. The most widely accepted interpretation was that here was the beginning of a full-scale drive to split the major partners in the Atlantic alliance, and a careful play to the widespread British sentiment against the United States' conduct of the Korean War was predicted. The men in the Politburo know that one of their greatest hopes lies in driving a wedge between England and the United States.

In the immediate wake of this speculation such a wedge was driven, not by Mr. Gromyko, but by the United States' failure to advise its ally of the devastating air raids to be made on North Korean plants situated near the Manchurian border. Immediate howls and counter-howls of indignation arose on both sides of the Atlantic.

Members of Parliament accused the United States of high-handed and shortsighted jeopardizing of the chances for a Korean truce through its launching of a full scale air offensive at a time when the greatest diplomacy and patience are demanded. The reaction in the United States was equally quick. The crypto-isolationists pounced on this new evidence for their vision of perfidious Albion. They have suspected all along that Britannia is secretly enamoured of Mao-Tse-Tung, and the English protests against our taking decisive action against his forces confirmed their worst fears. Widespread denunciation of Britain as an appeaser of Chinese Communism was heard in this country.

Harsh and ill-advised castigations were made on both sides, and the only gains from it all will be Moscow's. Mr. Gromyko must have smiled at the unexpected assistance he thus received in his task. Entirely aside from the wisdom or lack of it in the bombings themselves, the very nature of our Korean endeavor, carried out by the mandate of the United Nations, should preclude any such major unilateral decision on our part as was employed in this regrettable instance. The stakes in the game are too great for us to risk playing it alone.

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The "Liberal Catholic"

"THOSE WHOSE THEOLOGY HE SHARES FREQUENTLY DISTRUST HIM BECAUSE OF HIS POLITICS, AND THOSE WITH WHOM HE FEELS AT HOME POLITICALLY MAY DOUBT HIM BECAUSE OF HIS THEOLOGY."

WILLIAM P. CLANCY

THERE is a special burden, and the danger of a special presumption, in writing on the concept of a "liberal Catholic." The special burden is the deep historical antipathy which these two words have acquired toward each other, and the consequent difficulty of effecting any reconciliation between them. The danger of presumption lies in seeming to set up a kind of pseudo elite within the Church. "Liberal Catholic" may sound as insufferably smug as "Catholic Intellectual."

Yet the term *is* widely used to describe a type of Catholic whose world-view is marked by an enthusiastic acceptance of certain ideals for which liberalism has waged its great battles—maximum human freedom under law, social progress, and democratic equality. And there can be no doubt that the Catholics so described do constitute, if not an elite, at least a definite minority within the Church. The problem then presents itself of whether or not the point of view described as "liberal Catholic" does indeed contain inherent contradictions, and whether or not the minority so described in any sense compromise their Christian vocation.

The antipathy which the Catholic and the liberal have felt for each other is real, and its causes are basic to the philosophy of each. When Pius IX solemnly condemned "Liberalism" and denied that the Church could, or should, reconcile itself with "Progress" he pronounced the Church's judgment, once and for all, on that doctrinaire rationalism, secularism, and anticlericalism which lay at the base of liberalism's spirit in the nineteenth century. This condemnation was secretly welcomed by many Continental liberals. They heard in it the death-knell of the Catholic Church. The condemnation still stands, and the thoroughgoing liberal still reads it as the self-written epitaph of a religion which has announced its removal from the modern world.

As a result of this, the Catholic who associates himself with some of the struggles which are properly identified as "liberal", and who, consequently, gains a reputation as a *liberal* Catholic, is apt to find himself suspect among large numbers of his co-religionists. For them, the idea of a Catholic allying himself in any cause with the traditional enemies of the Church suggests a Catholic whose orthodoxy is at best doubtful, and whose loyalty is obviously weak. Certain Catholic journalists spend a lot of their time damning the "liberals", and when they find a "liberal Catholic" they feel sure that they've found a "so-called" Catholic.

But if a "liberal Catholic" is often viewed with suspicion by some of his fellow Catholics, his lot is even less happy among the liberals. The professional liberal is, of course, glad to find an occasional ally among the orthodox, but he is also surprised—and he is skeptical. To the extent that he trusts the man's liberalism, he tends to doubt his genuine Catholicism. Or, if he is convinced of this, he begins to doubt his liberalism.

The beleaguered "liberal Catholic" thus stands between two worlds which view each other with mutual distrust, and which, according to their proper lights, exclude each other. Those whose theology he shares frequently distrust him because of his politics, and those with whom he feels at home politically may doubt him because of his theology.

THE difficulty is partly a semantic one. Probably no Catholic who bears a reputation for "liberalism" welcomes the "liberal Catholic" label. The term itself is so burdened with historical and philosophical ambiguities that the kind of all-around misunderstanding described above follows almost inevitably upon its use. It defines nothing, and describes only by accident a world view far different from the vague attempts toward religious-philosophic syncretism which it is often interpreted as representing. It is essentially a Catholic affirmation of value wherever value is to be found, and an attempt to recover for the Catholic tradition elements which, through default, have been appropriated by movements hostile to the religious spirit. The "liberal Catholic" is a "liberal" only through the accident of liberalism's having struggled for some things which should properly have a Christian name. His efforts are aimed not at compromise but at recovery and redemption.

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It is ironic that although many nineteenth-century liberals actually welcomed the Church's strictures on the modern world, the final victory has belonged to Pius after all. The very things for which he condemned "Liberalism" and "Progress" in the nineteenth century are also the things which have led to liberalism's bad name in the twentieth. Its belief in the inevitability of progress, its overly optimistic estimate of human nature and consequent denial of evil, its dogmatic rationalism —these are ideas turned bitter in the terrible fulfillment of contemporary history. Pius IX would find unexpected allies in 1952. The "liberals" have become the scapegoats for history's failure, and the retreat from their easy hope is in full force. The nineteenth century's hero may well become the twentieth century's forgotten man. It appears more and more fashionable to talk about the future in terms of the "war between the absolutes"—a war in which the well-meaning liberal will find it difficult to take his place.

It would surely have been too much to expect that Catholics would omit taking a certain public satisfaction in this. Unfortunately, that satisfaction has sometimes been almost as indecent as it is presumptuous. All the "we've-always-told-you-so" talk about the "failure of the liberals," and the present low estate of liberalism, seems an extension of something which has been tragically wrong with so much Catholic thinking on the liberal problem during the past one hundred and fifty years. Faced with a very unliberal absolutism on the left, we may have cause bitterly to regret our writing an over-hasty obituary to the idealistic liberalism of the center. Because, if the West is to survive the onslaught of the new absolutism of the East, it will only be by preserving and revivifying, not the philosophy, but many of the values for which liberalism has fought, almost unaided, in the shaping of our world.

HISTORY has already vindicated the Church's condemnation of "Liberalism," and the vindication may well become increasingly complete. Moral relativism, anti-intellectualism, Rousseauistic optimism, religious indifferentism—all these by-words of historical liberalism have helped to lead us to the precipice on which we now stand. The tragedy of modern history, then, is not the condemnation itself, but rather what so many liberals—and Catholics—have made of the condemnation.

The liberals have taken the condemnation not only as a rebuke to their philosophy itself, but as a Catholic repudiation of everything for which they have struggled. The Church thus becomes in their eyes not only the enemy of moral relativism, religious indifferentism, and dogmatic rationalism, it also becomes the enemy of political liberty, social equality, and material progress. It becomes the eternal protector of the status quo, the perpetual tender of inquisitional fires, the vigilant enemy of the city of man. And so the fight for the goals of the city of man—for civil freedom, for social and economic equality, for a pluralistic society, assumes the guise of a struggle against the Church.

The liberals have been assisted toward this interpretation by a good many Catholics who, in their reactions against the philosophical errors condemned by the Popes, have tended to identify themselves with reactionary political regimes and social philosophies. Their abhorrence of the anti-religious spirit which poisoned, and unfortunately continues to poison, so much of the liberal outlook has blinded them to the genuinely spiritual and humanitarian values for which liberalism has fought. The result of this double misunderstanding has been the paradox of liberalism's frequently fighting the right battles for the wrong reasons, and Catholics reacting by fighting the wrong battles for the right reasons.

The Church condemned a philosophy of "Liberalism." By extending this to a blanket condemnation of liberals and everything for which they stand, Catholics condemn much that is properly their own, and in reaction espouse things which should be as repugnant to the Christian as they are to the liberal himself.

The outlook frequently described as that of the "liberal Catholic" believes that one of the great hopes for the future lies in the recovery and restoration to a Christian context of all things valuable and true. This does not imply any compromise of the Faith, any trafficking with the theological enemy. It does imply, however, that on many questions of political and social order the individual Catholic may find himself more in sympathy with the viewpoint commonly associated with liberalism than with the sterile reaction to liberalism common among many of his fellow Catholics. Hence the "liberal Catholic" category to which he is frequently assigned. But he should not be afraid of labels, even though he may regret the fact that they are usually misleading and meaningless.

What is called "liberal Catholicism" is for the most part an attempt to work toward a new synthesis of the Church's unchanging truths with whatever good is to be found in the modern city of man. The "liberal Catholic" is, in the best instances, the twentieth century Catholic synthesist. He remembers the admonition of Saint Paul: "And now, brethren, all that rings true, all that commands reverence, all that makes for right, all that is pure, all that is lovely, all that is gracious in the telling; virtue and merit, wherever virtue and merit are found—let this be the argument of your thoughts."

It has been the high mission of liberalism to fight for much of what is right and true in the modern world, while those who should have aided, and even

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anticipated its battle, have stood aside, busy reviling "Liberalism" for its philosophical errors, and defending impossibly archaic political and social orders as a bulwark against its aberrations. "Liberalism," as its enemies point out, has indeed failed, and the future of our society will not be the easy utopia envisioned by its nineteenth century prophets. But its failure has been as a philosophy, not as a vision, and although the future may not lie in the liberal dream, any attempt to build a civilization from which the best elements of that dream are absent is foredoomed to failure. Unless Catholics become more and more aware of this, the phenomenon which Pius XI described as the tragedy of the nineteenth century may be repeated, and this time on an even more catastrophic scale. The Church may now lose not merely a class, but a whole world-in-the-making.

WHAT the "liberal Catholic" pleads for is that Catholics should become as passionately dedicated to human dignity and freedom as the liberal has been. Liberalism may have fought its battles for the wrong reasons. The Catholic's mission should therefore be to redeem its struggle by supplying the right ones. The liberal may have advocated freedom of religion and the separation of civil and religious power because he is indifferent to absolute truth. Catholics should join him in advocating the same things because they insist on the absolute inviolability of the human conscience and the freedom of the act of faith. For the same reason they should share the liberal's aversion to censorship, suppression, and the arbitrary uses of temporal power in any effort to coerce the mind of man. History, as well as philosophy, should make them share the liberal's distaste for "calling the cops."

Unfortunately, tragically, the large implications of the lessons in political freedom and social equality which liberalism has taught the modern world have yet to be completely absorbed into popular Catholic thinking. The "liberals" are not always the villains in the denouement of modern culture. Those Catholics who have neglected that part of their Christian heritage which emphasizes human freedom and dignity, and who thus contributed to modern man's alienation from the Church, have also played their part. Their zeal to "protect" in a world where a narrow protection is no longer possible, their adamant refusal to repudiate any claim to special privilege in a pluralistic society, their slowness to realize the impossibilities of carrying-over methods of public coercion which may have had some justification in a united, sacral order, but which can only cause division and scandal in the modern lay state—all these are things which demand revaluation among Catholics.

This revaluation demands no sacrifice of whatever is essential to the Faith; it implies no surrender to relativism or secularism. Rather, it emphasizes what Cardinal Suhard pointed up as the Church's genius for eternal renewal. In order to build what is essential so that the Church may fulfil its mission in the modern world, there must exist a certain willingness to discard whatever of non-essential method and outlook has been carried over from a society which can never return. It is this affirmation, and this revaluation, always in the light of Catholic truth and subject to the guidance of the teaching Church, which the "liberal Catholic" asks of his fellow Catholics in the modern world.

What he earnestly seeks is an increasing Christian charity and (in all which is non-essential) an abandonment of label-thinking. The world is not divided into the "liberals" and the orthodox, the bad guys and the good guys. Men of good will, and vision, and wisdom are not confined to "our" side. The "liberal Catholic", therefore, finally asks that the "liberal" label be dropped in the too easy categorizing of his quest. He would be more content to be thought of as a Catholic who tries to be *catholic*.

SONG OF THE SOUL IN ITS INTIMATE UNION WITH GOD

O living flame of love!
How soothingly you wound
My soul, in that profundity and center
You once made havoc of!
Only consume it soon,
Tearing the veil away in love's encounter.

O cautery that freshens!
O treasure of a wound!
Caresses light as air! Considerate palm
With settlement past measure!
(Fragrance of heaven around)!
Slaying, you lift us living from the tomb.

O lamps of fire, whose light
Streams in the cavernous soul:
Through the deep hollows, dazzled from above
(Once blind in a blank night)
Visiting splendor rolls
Lavishing warmth and brilliance on their love.

Oh how serene, how loving
Here in my hidden breast
Waking in crannies you are master of!
With your affectionate breathing
All health and heavenly rest
How delicately I'm caught afire with love!

Saint John of the Cross
(Translated by John Frederick Nims)

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Death of a Collaborationist

R. L. BRUCKBERGER

I FIRST met Joseph Darnand during the war, when he was lieutenant of the Commando Corps to which I had myself transferred. I have recounted elsewhere his heroic conduct during the war, his passionate love of his country, his bitterness over the fall of France; then his growing confidence in the future and his honest belief, at last, that the future of France lay with Pétain, whose influence over him had become very great. Darnand's collaborationism was born of his spirit of military discipline and of his respect for Pétain as a military leader.

In May of 1941, Darnand and I parted company in a complete split over the question of avenging France against Germany. I was a member of the Resistance. He was becoming a collaborationist.

This is the story of how I met him again.

Darnand was captured by the Intelligence Service near Milan, in the early summer of 1945. From the moment I read the news, I expected him to call me as a witness for the defense. I did not hear from him, however, and I learned later that he had forbidden his lawyers to call on anyone. He was alone; he wished to remain alone and not embarrass his former friends. The papers announced that his trial would be held October 3. I sent a letter to Darnand's lawyers, offering myself as a witness for him. At the very last moment I received a telegram asking me to come.

I arrived in Paris the evening before the trial, and talked with one of his lawyers, who told me this: "The only thing in this trial which interests Darnand is to save his honor. He cannot bear the black picture that has been painted of him."

The picture of Darnand, as it had grown in our minds the last two years of the occupation, was frightful. To most Frenchmen, it is still frightful and abominable. I can close my eyes, and the cruel memories of those terrible years flood into my brain like corpses floating on stagnant water. Every week, companions arrested and thrown to the human beasts of the Gestapo; the cold torture; the reprisal camps; the salvos of executions against cemetery walls early in the morning; the hunting of men in the mountains; assistance given to the enemy by some French people; even the sight of our Croix de Guerre on German uniforms. And then, the daily anguish, the despair, the great lassitude of body and soul, the taste for death, and fear; ignoble, sordid fear, always at our sides like an abominably faithful companion.

All that was represented, in the minds of the people, by one name: Darnand.

The trial was held in the second chamber of the Palace of Justice, before the High Court. I had been told that the room was too small for the proceedings of the High Court. But when I came in, it looked as big as a church, filled with faces. They were everywhere. At one end, the bench for the judges. In the middle at school children's desks, a mob of journalists from all over the world, packed close to each other. Then the audience. Stands had been put up on both sides of the room. They were completely filled. The atmosphere was that of a play or a spectacle. I sat down near the door to reflect on what I would say.

The absence of witnesses for the defense was understandable, since Darnand refused to call them. But it seemed to me that the prosecutor was taking his duties very lightly, not to call any himself. Human justice is a mockery, if all its machinery is not used to bring out of its processes an assurance of proper judicial order. The most serious accusations, even the most serious establishments of fact, are not sufficient to condemn a man, whatever he may be. The accusations and the facts must be submitted to the irrefutable authority of proofs and witnesses, of inquiry and instruction, according to law. The worst criminal in the world can expect from his trial the objective establishment of his rights. That is what I expected for Darnand. That is what his trial did not give him.

AS I sat there, the quality of the silence that suddenly fell, warned me that Darnand had just entered. I looked up. He was there, looking for someone in the room. When he saw me, he smiled sadly and nodded. I returned his nod. Why should we meet again here? The atmosphere had changed. With him, tragedy entered the room. The whole audience seemed to be holding its breath as it awaited the beginning of the most purely tragic act it had ever been given me to witness. All the conditions of ancient tragedy were brought together in this room. The denouement was not in doubt. The rites and the principal changes of the plot, the gestures heavy with the meaning of life and death, all were known in advance and in their order. And all the participants knew in advance that the convention would pursue its murderous logic to the end, even to the little pool of blood on the dew-wet grass of a slope in the Ile-de-France. All this was known.

The bailiff announced the Court. Then, as after the three raps which in our country precedes the rising of the curtain, we were all carried away in the inflexible

Father Bruckberger, O.P., was chief chaplain of the French Resistance. This article forms part of a book, "One Sky to Share," to be published later this month by P. J. Kenedy.

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rhythm of this tragedy, in which nothing was left to be discovered except the behavior of the actors. The passionate curiosity that captivates all eyes can be detestable. It is the actors who must ennoble it, lift it up and turn it toward serene justice, and perhaps toward compassion.

After the establishment of identity, the accusation was read. The legal style and the solemn tone gave a character of abstractness to the reading. It seemed that Darnand was already dead. In any case, he was beyond all human reach. All the roads of his destiny had brought him before this little man in black, whose monotonous voice evoked the curses of the dead, in which all a man's life appears deformed by human malediction.

The reading was over. I had to leave the room. Witnesses are not allowed to be present at the questioning of the accused.

How long the interrogation lasted, I do not know. My head was empty. What could I say when I went back? I began to pray. And I thought of France, our disfigured France of 1945. I begged Joan of Arc to give me a little of her great pity. For this concerned France, nothing else but France. Darnand was a soldier. I was not going to insult him by shedding tears over his death. But the moment I thought of his honor, which he was defending on the other side of the wall, then it became a question of France.

I would speak of France. I would speak of Darnand's love for his country, the bravery with which he had fought for her; I would recount his exploits and the glory he and his country had given to each other; I would quote that wonderful citation he won in 1919, which acclaimed him as "an artisan of the final victory." (The citation was signed by Pétain, alas!) France must not escape this tragedy. It was France alone who had the right to claim this man's blood. His blood would be shed only for her.

The interrogation was finished, and I was called back into the room. The atmosphere of tragedy was even more concentrated now. As I walked down the aisle, those thousands of glances weighed me down. I took the oath and made the Sign of the Cross. I said all that I wished to say, as I had wished to say it. The silence was complete.

Darnand, who had not flinched during the accusation nor the interrogation, who was not to flinch during the verdict, wept when I spoke of the Commandos.

At 8:30 that evening the verdict was pronounced, and Darnand was sentenced to death for treason.

THE execution was to take place at nine in the morning of October 10. On October 9, I spent nearly the whole day with Darnand. I read to him the letter of Saint Catherine of Siena in which she relates the story of the execution of a young man, condemned in a political trial, whom she had prepared for death. He asked me to leave the book with him, and he reread the letter several times.

In the evening, I had to leave Darnand. As I was going out the door, he called me back:

"I have given up life, once and for all. But one never knows what may happen. If I am pardoned, do not accept hard labor in my behalf, even for five years. I don't want either solitary confinement or hard labor. The only thing I would accept is the command of a Commando Corps in Indochina, to prove to them who I am."

It is easy to smile at this hypothetical refusal. But those who know how hard it is to kill in oneself the physical hope of life will appreciate his words.

The morning of the execution, I arrived at the prison at seven o'clock. Darnand had slept well. I heard his confession, and celebrated for him the Mass that implores the grace of a brave death. At the moment of Communion, he burst into sobs. When the Mass was finished, he said, "I'm sorry. I had a moment of weakness. But it's over now. I promise to have courage."

Back in his cell, Darnand drank a cup of coffee, very hot and strong, and smoked a pipe or two. He gave his last instructions, arranged his things. He was calm, tranquil, smiling and grave. At one point in the conversation, he uttered this admirable phrase:

"Now that I am dead . . ."

The progress of time was frightful to live through. It is not death that is to be dreaded. It is when death is foreseen, at a fixed hour, ineluctable, ritual, that it becomes a fearful thing. It is that liturgy of holocaust, that slow and inexorable ceremony of execution.

The door opened and the prosecutor appeared.

"M. Darnand," he said, "it is my sad duty to inform you that your petition for pardon has been refused, and that your sentence is to be carried out."

He was followed by a whole train of officials. I would never have believed that it took so many people to kill one man. Darnand held his pipe in his fingers and gave him a look both courageous and childlike.

"Sir," he replied, "in the first place I never signed a petition for pardon. Then I have some things to say . . ."

Darnand spoke in his terribly calm voice. He spoke for ten minutes, perhaps a quarter of an hour. He reviewed the trial and reproached the prosecutor for its defects and negligences: "I should have been tried by court-martial, without preliminary interrogations. But since you insisted on a civil trial, you should have seen to it that it was well conducted. I pardon you, and I hope that when it is your turn to die, your conscience will be as clear as mine." The prosecutor said nothing. The next day the papers reported that Darnand had had no declaration to make.

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IT was Darnand who gave the signal for leaving. He gave it as he had done in the Commandos when going on patrol: "On our way!" As we went down the long ominous corridors of the prison, he began to sing the song of farewells:

"Must we say good-bye,
Forever and forever?
Must we say good-bye,
To meet each other never?
This is only *au revoir,* my brothers . . ."

The patrol wagon was waiting at the door. Darnand and the gendarmes climbed in, then his lawyer and I, and last the chaplain with the prison warden. Darnand refused to sit down. He spoke a little, slowly, his blue eyes dreamy, his body shaken by the jolting of the car, his manacled hands supporting him against the sidewall. He thanked the warden for the decent treatment he had been given in the prison. Suddenly he looked at the gendarmes: "You can tell your children that you went with Joseph Darnand to the firing squad. You can tell them that I went freely. Now I am free."

And after a moment, "You think you are leading me to death. Well, I'm going into life."

A little later, in a gentle, dreamy voice, he said, "Yes, I have good blood. Strong and generous blood, peasant blood that never lied to anyone. I've had it thrown in my face often enough—that I was a peasant."

Then again, in that same tone which pierced my heart: "Bruck, listen to what I say. Now I see things better than I have ever seen them. I never attached enough importance to love. I did not believe in the efficacy of love. Tell my comrades that if they want to be faithful to my memory, they must try to win the hearts of others."

We had arrived. We were inside the fort of Chatillon, on a little rise of ground. We got out of the patrol wagon. It was a clear day, the light beautiful among the trees.

"I am glad it's a fine day," said Darnand. "Look at those magnificent trees."

What struck me was the terrifying proximity of the execution squad less than a half dozen feet away. Twelve rifles in two ranks of six. The officer was at the side, his sabre unsheathed. The soldiers wore the berets of the Alpine Chasseurs, our berets of the Commandos.

"Look at them, Bruck," said Darnand. "They're probably twenty years old. What a good French look they have, with their berets. They're nice. They might have been my men."

Tears came to my eyes, but he said, "Careful, Bruck! You promised me. . . ."

And so I had. I swallowed the lump in my throat and tried to smile. His hands were unshackled. He said farewell to those who had followed him, and knelt for absolution. He rose, embraced me, and kissed the crucifix. Then, stepping tranquilly, he walked to the post and faced the firing squad. A soldier offered to blindfold him. He refused. The soldier pretended to tie his hands, but a little later I saw that they were unbound. During this time, Darnand recited in a clear voice the refrain of the Commandos. The rifles were swung into position. He looked at me, his face radiant.

"Farewell, Father . . . Farewell, my friends. . . . Vive Dieu! . . . Vive la France!"

At the report of the guns, I saw his dear face, the face of the old Darnand, stricken with amazement. His body sank gently down on one side. I was watching but I could not understand what was happening, what had happened to bring him to this. The little lieutenant ran to the body and discharged his revolver into the head. The soldiers marched away. Everyone turned his back and moved aside. Not a word was said. A coffin was brought. Then I realized that Darnand was dead.

We buried him in the cemetery of Thiais-Parisien. I was able to bless his grave without weeping.

Darnand is in the City of the blessed, where there is neither mourning, nor outcry, nor wailing, nor pain, where God Himself dries our tears.

Going back to Paris, I looked up at the sky. It was beautiful. And the light shed its peaceful assurance on all things. Then I felt with an ineffable sweetness that the pity of God never abandons us.

THE SCREEN

ROBIN HOOD'S AUNT

IF we can judge by two fine new films, the movie-goer is the winner in the high-finance deals that prompt Hollywood producers to use up frozen foreign funds by making pictures abroad. Walt Disney's studio and Warner Brothers have wisely spent some of their pounds sterling in England, and the result is a couple of little gems.

As sparkling green and fresh as Sherwood Forest where most of it takes place is "The Story of Robin Hood." Walt Disney, who did so well in producing "Treasure Island" in England (with live actors, not cartoons) does even better in depicting the adventures of the famous twelfth-century outlaw-patriot. Script-writer Lawrence E. Watkin went back to original sources and ballads to retell the familiar tales about the half-legendary, half-historical Robert Fitzooth, who was outlawed and took on the name of Robin Hood in defending the people oppressed by Prince John during the years when Richard the Lion Hearted was on Crusades and held prisoner in Austria. This script that

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mixes fact with fiction has been imaginatively directed by Ken Annakin.

The choice of Richard Todd as Robin is excellent. Perhaps he doesn't bounce quite as much as Douglas Fairbanks or Errol Flynn, but this "beardless whelp" (as Prince John describes him) has a fresh, youthful vitality and vigor that fit his romantic (but not mushy) scenes with Maid Marian as well as his more robust sequences showing the gathering of his Merrie Men. This clan of green-garbed men of courage are well cast: James Hayter as the jovial, substantially-built Friar Tuck, James Robertson Justice as big, blond Little John, Elton Hayes in good voice as Allan-A-Dale, the roving minstrel who sings old ballads about Robin's exploits as well as several lively new songs written especially for the picture. And of course there are many more in this daring band who are so handy with the arrow, so brave in robbing the rich to help the poor and in gathering treasures to ransom their king.

The cast throughout is good, especially newcomer Joan Rice as Maid Marian (who looks equally attractive in handsome court costumes and in green tights when she flees from villainous John to Robin) and Martita Hunt as Queen Eleanor, who has quite a problem with her good son away and her bad son in control. I also liked Peter Finch's performance as the wicked sheriff of Nottingham, who carried out John's orders in overtaxing the poor which forced them to poach on royal lands because they had no food. "Robin Hood" is well spiked with social significance—statements about the strength of England stemming from the well-being of her peasants and about the evils of unfair taxation and the curtailment of free speech.

But Disney's version is no dry lecture on democratic principles. It is a high-spirited affair that uses visuals expertly to make its points. And its Technicolor is magnificent. You'll get almost as much pleasure out of the colorful pageantry as out of the adventures.

I NEVER thought I could take another movie version of "Charley's Aunt," that old dodo by Brandon Thomas. I had seen the stage musical comedy made from it by George Abbott with the gay music and lyrics by Frank Loesser, but I really didn't expect the movie of "Where's Charley?" to be so utterly charming.

It gets off to a slow cinematic start with chorus boys and girls in stylized 1890 costumes singing the title tune; but once Ray Bolger as Charley comes on and the silly plot gets rolling, everything from then on is sheer fun—even the situation in which Charley has to pose as his own aunt who comes "from Brazil where the nuts come from."

"Where's Charley?" has many assets: lovely Technicolor with handsome shots of Oxford where most of the exteriors were photographed; a good cast with many unfamiliar faces—Robert Shackleton as Charley's good friend, Allyn McLerie and Mary Germaine as Amy and Kitty, and many others including the hilarious Horace Cooper as the girls' guardian, who makes a play for Charley's Aunt and "her" money. The streamlined screenplay written by John Monks, Jr., has been given well-timed comedy pacing by Director David Butler. The dance and production numbers staged by Michael Kidd actually move with the plot and are beautifully danced by Bolger, McLerie and all concerned. (The "Pernambuco" ballet gets a little long but its satire is good fun.) And the Loesser songs are bound to give you a lift. If you don't come away singing "My Darling, My Darling" or the amusing "Make a Miracle" you're sure to be dancing to "Once in Love With Amy."

Ray Bolger, of course, really makes "Where's Charley?" this year's gayest musical treat. As Charley in a striped blazer with lots of "Cheerio, you chaps" (although little attempt is made at an English accent) or as Auntie in curled wig and fingerless gloves, Bolger's clowning never sags. His homely puss is a perfect asset for the role, and his winning personality is irresistible. Who could resist singing when he asks the audience to join him in the lilting ditty about Amy. On his dance platform alone, Bolger could win the nomination at either convention. My vote is for Bolger, not Wintergreen.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"CATHOLICS AS JURORS"

New York, N. Y.

TO THE Editors: Our attention has been drawn to the editorial in the May 2 issue of The Commonweal, "Catholics As Jurors." In discussing the various groups who hold strong prejudices about Communists, and after citing the Hearst and Scripps-Howard newspaper chains and leaders of American business as being anti-Communists, the following statement is made: "It does not seem out of the way to mention here other groups whose prejudices would be at least as strong in a contrary direction. One assuredly would be the uncritical adherents of the American Civil Liberties Union; another the loyal readers of the *Nation;* a third the large assortment of unaffiliated individuals who seek to be viewed as liberals above all else."

This statement describes the American Civil Liberties Union as holding prejudices in favor of Communists. This is erroneous. The fact is that the ACLU is interested solely in defending the rights of individuals,

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not their political philosophies or opinions. Unfortunately, this distinction is not clearly understood and the public often confuses defense of the rights guaranteed in the Bill of Rights with support of the views of those whose rights are defended. In its 32-year history of non-partisan defense of civil liberties, ACLU has defended the rights of Communists, Fascists, businessmen, labor unions, the Ku Klux Klan and many others.

ALAN REITMAN,
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, AMERICAN
CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

Mr. Reitman is correct in questioning the telescoped reference to the Civil Liberties Union in the editorial to which he refers, which could easily have been misunderstood. We did not intend to imply that the ACLU is a pro-Communist organization. (Indeed Communists are explicitly proscribed from membership on its Board of Directors.) We would sometimes differ with that organization, however, on what constitutes "clear and present danger." It seems to us that, when Communists are charged with subversive or treasonable activities, the ACLU so focuses its concern on the rights of the accused as individuals in our democracy that it neglects to take into due account their role in our mortal struggle with the Soviet Union. In general it seems to us that our courts have been conscientious in giving Communists a fair trial.

THE EDITORS.

"MORALITY BY FIAT"

Washington, D.C.

TO the Editors: I have just been reading your editorial, "Morality by Fiat", in the issue of May 30th. It has seemed to me—as it apparently seems to you—that this "Gathings investigation" of television and radio is a diversion from what should be the main effort. It has a negative rather than a positive approach to a very real problem; and I cannot see how any lasting or constructive results can come from it.

As you doubtless know, I have myself made a proposal in this field, in collaboration with Senators Bricker, Saltonstall and Hunt. We have proposed the creation of a "national citizens advisory board on radio and television." Such a board would, we could hope, make recommendations as to how the United States might get the higher level of programming which it so obviously needs.

Our proposed advisory board would be composed of eleven outstanding citizens. They would make an annual report to Congress, the FCC and the American people—in which they survey the trends of the previous year and make suggestions as to how the most promising trends could be encouraged.

My own feeling is that television can be a mighty force in making America a literate nation, conscious of its heavy responsibilities. At the present moment it looks to me as though the three most promising paths for constructive action are: (1) the development of the subscription technique; (2) the development of stations controlled by educational institutions or agencies; (3) the hope of persuading or requiring commercial stations to give more and better time to educational and public broadcasting.

WILLIAM BENTON.
U.S. SENATE

OF NOTE

TOLERANCE AND THE ABSOLUTES

THE quarterly *Journal of Arts and Letters* (4443 Alton Place, N.W. Washington 16, D.C.) has been reorganized and is now edited by Riley Hughes and a group of associate editors: Rudolf Allers, Donald Attwater, Barry Byrne, Mary Ellen Evans, Jerome G. Kerwin, Brother Justus George, F.S.C., Father John M. Oesterreicher, Kurt Reinhardt, Dietrich von Hildebrand and Harold H. Watts. An article by Jacques Maritain in the current issue, "Western Civilization and Religious Faith," is the text of an address given before a meeting of the American Library Association. The following is an excerpt:

> Of course, for anyone who believes in God and in truth, religious division among men is a great misfortune in itself. But it is an historical fact, and in modern democratic societies, in which men subscribing to diverse religious or non-religious creeds have to share in and work for the same political or temporal common good, the body politic must confront this fact in terms of freedom and of equal civic rights for all its members. . . .
>
> There are people who think that *not to believe in any truth,* or *not to adhere firmly to any assertion as unshakably true in itself* is a primary condition required of democratic citizens in order to be tolerant of one another and to live in peace with one another. These people are in fact the most intolerant people, for if perchance they were to believe in something as unshakably true, they would feel compelled, by the same stroke, to impose by force and coercion their own belief on their co-citizens. The only remedy they have found to get rid of their abiding tendency to fanaticism is to cut themselves off from truth. That's a suicidal method. And it is a suicidal conception of democracy: not only would a democratic society which lived on universal skepticism condemn it-

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self to death by starvation; but it would also enter a process of self-annihilation, from the very fact that no democratic society can live without a common practical belief in those truths which are freedom, justice, law, and other tenets of democracy; and that any belief in these things as objectively and unshakably true, as well as in any other kind of truth, would be brought to naught by the preassumed law of universal skepticism.

In the field of political science, the opinion which I am criticizing was made into a theory, — the so-called "relativistic justification of democracy," — by Hans Kelsen. It is very significant that in order to establish his philosophy of the temporal order, and show that democracy implies ignorance of, or doubt about, any absolute truth, either religious or metaphysical, Kelsen has recourse to Pilate; so that, in refusing to distinguish the just from the unjust, and washing his hands, this dishonest judge thus becomes the lofty precursor of relativistic democracy. Quoting the dialogue between Jesus and Pilate, St. John, Chapter 18, in which Jesus says: "To this am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth," and Pilate answers: "What is truth?" and then delivers Jesus over to the fury of the crowd, Kelsen concludes that because Pilate did not know what truth is, therefore he called upon the people, and asked them to decide; and thus in a democratic society it is up to the people to decide, and mutual tolerance reigns, because nobody knows what the truth is.

The truth of which Kelsen was speaking was religious and metaphysical truth, what they call "absolute truth," as if any truth, insofar as it is true, were not absolute in its own sphere. As Helen Silving puts it in "The Conflict of Liberty and Equality," *Iowa Law Review,* Spring 1950, the burden of Kelsen's argument (which she herself does not admit) is: "Whoever knows or claims to know absolute truth or absolute justice", that is to say, *truth* or justice simply, "cannot be a democrat, because he cannot and is not expected to admit the possibility of a view different from his own, the *true* view. The metaphysicist and the believer are bound to impose their eternal truth on other people, on the ignorant, and on the people without vision. Theirs is the holy crusade of the one who knows against the one who does not know or does not share in God's grace. Only if we are aware of our ignorance of what is the *Good* may we call upon the people to decide."

It is impossible more accurately to summarize a set of more barbarous and erroneous assumptions. If it were true that whoever knows or claims to know truth or justice cannot admit the possibility of a view different from his own, and is bound to impose his true view on other people by violence, the rational animal would be the most dangerous of beasts. In reality it is through rational means, that is, through persuasion, not through coercion, that the rational animal is bound by his very nature to try to induce his fellow men to share in what it knows or claims to know as true or just. And the metaphysician, because he trusts human reason, and the believer, because he trusts divine grace, and knows that "a forced faith is a hypocrisy hateful to God and man," as Cardinal Manning put it, do not use holy war to make their "eternal truth" accessible to other people, they appeal to the inner freedom of other people by offering them either their demonstrations or the testimony of their love. And we do not call upon the people to decide because we are aware of our ignorance of what is the good, but because we know this truth, and this good, that the people have a right to self-government.

It is, no doubt, easy to observe that in the history of mankind, nothing goes to show that, from primitive times on, religious feeling or religious ideas have been particularly successful in pacifying men; religious differences seem rather to have fed and sharpened their conflicts. On the one hand truth always makes trouble, and those who bear witness to it are always persecuted. On the other hand — and this is the point we must face — those who know or claim to know it happen sometimes to persecute others. I don't deny the fact. I say that this fact, like all other facts, needs to be understood. It only means that, given the weakness of our nature, the impact of the highest and most sacred things upon the coarseness of the human heart is liable to make these things, by accident, a prey to its passions, as long as it has not been purified by genuine love. It is nonsense to regard fanaticism as a fruit of religion.

Fanaticism is a natural tendency rooted in our basic egotism and will to power. It seizes upon any noble feeling to live on it. The only remedy for religious fanaticism is the Gospel light and the progress of religious consciousness in faith itself and in that fraternal love which is the fruit of the human soul's union with God. For then man realizes the infinite transcendence of truth and of God. Those who place in hell everyone who does not profess the true faith offend their own God in His transcendence and generosity. The more strong and deep faith becomes, the more man kneels down, not before his own alleged ignorance of truth, but before the inscrutable mystery of divine truth, and before the hidden

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ways in which God goes to meet those who seek Him.

To sum up, the real problem has to do with the human subject, on the one hand, with his rights with regard to his fellowmen, and on the other hand, with the vicious inclinations which derive from his will to power. The error of the absolutists who would like to impose truth by coercion comes from the fact they shift their right feelings about the object, from the object to the subject, and think that just as error has no rights of its own and should be banished from the mind (through the means of the mind), so man when he is in error has no rights of his own and should be banished from human fellowship (through the means of human power).

Similarly, the error of the theorists who make relativism, ignorance, and doubt a necessary condition for mutual tolerance comes from the fact that they shift their right feelings about the subject, from the subject to the object, and thus deprive man and the human intellect of the very act — adherence to truth — in which consists both man's dignity and reason for living.

They begin, as we have seen apropos of Kelsen, with the supreme truths either of metaphysics or of faith. But science also deals with truth, though in science the discovery of a new truth supplants most often a previous theory which was hitherto considered true. Well, what will happen if human fanaticism takes hold of what it claims to be scientific truth at a given moment? Suffice it to look at the manner in which the Stalinist state imposes on scientists its own physical, biological, linguistic, or economic truth. Then, shall we conclude that in order to escape such shameful oppression the only way is to give up science and scientific truth, and to take refuge in ignorance?

It is truth, not ignorance, which makes us humble, and given us the sense of what remains unknown in our very knowledge. In one sense only there is wisdom in appealing to our ignorance: if we mean the ignorance of those who know, not the ignorance of those who are in the dark.

Be it a question of science, metaphysics, or religion, the man who says: "What it truth?" as Pilate did, is not a tolerant man, but a betrayer of the human race. There is real and genuine tolerance only when a man is firmly and absolutely convinced of a truth, or of what he holds to be a truth, and when he at the same time recognizes the right of those who deny this truth to exist, and to contradict him, and to speak their own mind, not because they are free from truth but because they seek truth in their own way, and because he respects in them human nature and human dignity, and those very resources and living springs of the intellect and of conscience which make them potentially capable of attaining the truth he loves, if some day they happen to see it.

To say tolerance, moreover, is not enough. For tolerance has a merely negative connotation. The right word is friendship, or love, brotherly love. Only love, which is a positive force, can really enforce tolerance in human life. It's a fateful delusion to substitute skepticism for love.

The conviction each of us has, rightly or wrongly, regarding the limitations, deficiencies, errors of others, does not prevent friendship between minds. In such a fraternal dialogue, there must be a kind of forgiveness and remission, not with regard to ideas—ideas deserve no forgiveness if they are false—but with regard to the condition of him who travels the road at our side. Every believer knows very well that all men will be judged —both himself and all others. But neither he nor another is God, able to pass judgment. And what each one is before God, neither the one nor the other knows. Here the *Judge not* of the Gospel applies with its full force. We can render judgment concerning ideas, truths, and errors; good or bad actions; character, temperament, and what appears to us of a man's interior disposition. But we are utterly forbidden to judge the innermost heart, that inaccessible center where the person day after day weaves his own fate and ties the bonds binding him to God. When it comes to that, there is only one thing to do, and that is to trust in God. And that is precisely what love for our neighbor prompts us to do.

Love for our neighbor, or the friendship of charity, does not merely make us recognize the *existence* of others, — although as a matter of fact here is something already difficult enough for men, and something which includes everything essential. Not only does it make us recognize that another exists, and not as an accident of the empirical world, but as a human being who exists before God, and has a right to exist. Love for our neighbor springs from our very faith, and it helps us to recognize whatever beliefs other than our own include of truth and of dignity, of human and divine values. It makes us respect them, urges us on ever to seek in them everything that is stamped with the mark of man's original greatness and of the prevenient care and generosity of God. It helps us to come to a mutual understanding of one another. It doe not make us go beyond our faith, but beyond ourselves. Faith in God is the root of neighborly love, and neighborly love is the core of genuine tolerance.

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Socialism in American Life

WILL HERBERG

AS an organized force, socialism in this country is virtually extinct. Never much more than peripheral in American public life, although forty years ago it seemed destined for great things, the socialist movement today comprises little more than a handful of stalwarts cherishing a loyalty without hope. By ordinary political standards, American socialism must be written off as a dismal failure.

And yet there is a sense in which it is possible to say that socialism has triumphed in the United States. The causes for which generations of socialists struggled since the inception of the movement in this country have most of them been realized, to the degree that idealistic causes can ever be realized. Virtually the entire socialist "minimum program" of 1912, for example, has been enacted into law in the course of the past two decades. Contemporary social policy follows lines that would have been regarded as thoroughly socialistic thirty years ago.

Social security is firmly established; the right of labor to organize and bargain collectively is acknowledged even in hostile legislation; an extensive plan of public housing is associated with the name of Senator Taft. In this sense, it is certainly true that we are all socialists of a sort today. Socialism, it seems, has triumphed, though the socialist movement is at the verge of extinction.

We may gain some insight into this strange paradox if we recall that socialism has always been compounded of diverse and perhaps irreconcilable elements. On the one hand, it has striven to give expression to a deep concern for the exploited and oppressed in modern industrial society; on the other, it has proclaimed the gospel of economic collectivism as a panacea for all social ills. It has presented itself as a movement for economic and social reform and at the same time as a total "philosophy of life" in conscious rivalry with the traditional religions of our civilization.

The ambiguity of the socialist idea was not so obvious in the earlier days of the movement. The impact of the crisis of our time, however, has brought this ambiguity to the fore and compelled a profound revision in socialist thinking. Thoroughgoing collectivism has revealed itself—here the Soviet experience has been decisive—as the economic underpinning of totalitarian despotism, while the militantly secularist-materialist philosophy of Marxism has proven woefully inadequate to sustain meaningful existence for free men. As a consequence, a profound and far-reaching differentiation has taken place in Marxist ranks.

Communism, relentlessly pursuing the logic of secularism and collectivism, has ended up as an ideology of total enslavement. The democratic elements in the socialist movement, on the other hand, aghast at this outcome, have shrunk back from the ultimate logic of their official philosophy and are striving to reaffirm their humanistic, libertarian convictions—at the price, however, of abandoning any totalistic philosophical pretensions. Contemporary democratic socialism no longer proclaims itself a rival religion; it is content to make its appeal merely as a movement for economic and social reform. Collectivism is no longer exalted as a higher way of life in which all human problems will be resolved; it is now recommended in much more cautious terms as a device of limited application that may well prove useful in certain areas of the national economy. It is often hard to tell just what remains of socialism in the older, more comprehensive sense.

In America, the extensive reform program of the Socialist Party, which once sounded so far-fetched and utopian, has been almost entirely translated into law and social practice. American "capitalism" has shown a capacity for change and self-reform that would have amazed its eulogists of two generations ago almost as much as its detractors. Ironically, as Reinhold Niebuhr has acutely pointed out, we are saved by our inconsistency and "common sense," which sets limits to our pretensions and permits us to talk big about "laissez faire" and "free enterprise," while quite pragmatically developing a flexible economy remarkably responsive to the changing requirements of industrial technology and social justice.

"Americanism" has thus triumphed over socialism —but only by appropriating virtually the entire socialist program, short of the "ultimate" demand for the "social ownership and operation of the means of production." And about this "ultimate" demand socialists themselves are no longer so certain. With the "immediate" part of its program taken over by "capitalism" and its traditional "ultimate" demand thrown into grave question, even in its own thinking, is it any wonder that American socialism has lost its inner drive and has shriveled into insignificance?

Mr. Herberg contributes frequently to Commentary and other leading publications. He is the author of "Judaism and Modern Man."

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THE story of American socialism is the theme of the symposium, *Socialism and American Life**, recently issued by Princeton University Press. This is a monumental work, a comprehensive, scholarly study of the historical and ideological background of socialism, both Marxist and non-Marxist, in this country; of its forms, history, and development; of its philosophy, economics, and political theory; of its sociology and psychology; of its implications for literature and art. The fourteen men whose papers compose the first volume (there is also an introductory chapter by the editors) are in general well selected, although the choice of a man of Paul M. Sweezy's notorious sympathies to do the paper on Marxian economics may certainly be questioned.

In all cases, the treatment is more than competent; indeed, in some—I have in mind particularly Albert T. Mollegen's "The Religious Basis of Western Socialism," Daniel Bell's "The Background and Development of Marxian Socialism in the United States," David F. Bowers' "American Socialism and the Socialist Philosophy of History," and Donald Drew Egbert's "Socialism and American Art"—the papers are contributions of the first order, notable for their scope, depth, and originality. They also make interesting reading throughout.

The second volume is devoted to a series of quite readable bibliographical essays geared to the studies that comprise the first volume. They constitute far and away the best and most thorough job in this field that has ever been done, and all students of the subject stand indebted to Mr. T. D. Seymour Basset and his staff. The entire work, under the editorship of Donald Drew Egbert and Stow Persons, is the outgrowth of student conferences conducted at Princeton by the Program in American Civilization.

The effort throughout is not merely to present and interpret the story of American socialism in its various aspects, but also to relate it to American life. This is by no means an easy task, for the repercussions of socialism in American life have been complex, subtle, and bafflingly ambiguous. Consider the political aspects, discussed by several contributors to the symposium.

In its own right, as an independent factor in politics, socialism has played but a slight role in American life. Yet its indirect influence has been far from trifling. Through socialist participation in third-party and labor-party movements, American politics has in many ways been affected by radical groups in themselves largely peripheral. Much more important has been the general influence of socialist thought on American social and political development. Socialist criticism and agitation have clearly constituted a most significant factor in arousing the public conscience to existing evils and in advancing social reform. Yet in its concern for social justice, American socialism has quite uncritically contributed to promoting the paternalistic "welfare state." It has hailed every extension of governmental intervention in economic and social life as a triumph of "social responsibility," without realizing that such intervention often tended to fortify the trend toward the omnicompetent state with totalitarian jurisdiction over every aspect of human life. This ambiguity is but a facet of the radical ambiguity at the heart of socialism: *Is it libertarian and personalistic in its implications or does it all add up to a program of totalitarian "welfare" regimentation?* Socialism, traditionally understood, has harbored potentials in both directions; the crisis of socialism, to which, in its various aspects, several studies in this work bear witness, finds its roots in this unresolved conflict.

PARTICULARLY significant, it seems to me, is the fact that a number of contributors to this volume find it convenient to employ as basic interpretive concepts the categories of theology and religious sociology. For socialism in its classical form is essentially a secular religion and can be adequately understood only as such. Amidst the catastrophic events of the past forty years, this secular religion has been compelled by its inner dynamic to transform itself into the demonic cult of Communism. Democratic socialists, recoiling with horror from such a prospect, have been confronted with the necessity of finding a new "philosophy," in terms of which they might salvage and give meaning to socialist goals and values.

By and large, there are two directions along which this new "philosophy" may be sought, and both are suggested in papers included in this work. On the one side is the effort to construct an "alternative socialist philosophy" on the basis of a secular humanism of a Deweyite cast; this is what Sidney Hook recommends in the third section of his paper on "The Philosophical Basis of Marxian Socialism in the United States." On the other side is the effort to give socialist thinking a theological grounding in the Judeo-Christian understanding of man's nature, destiny, and life in society; A. T. Mollegen's "neo-Calvinist socialism" and the "theologically grounded socialism" suggested by this reviewer towards the end of his paper on American Marxist political theory, fall into this category.

Despite some overlapping and a good deal of common ground in dealing with immediate problems, these two ways are distinct and divergent. A choice between them confronts everyone who believes that the essential socialist "idea"—the building of a responsible society—is worth preserving and fighting for. There is much in these volumes that will help one make the choice.

* Socialism and American Life. Editors, Donald Drew Egbert and Stow Persons; bibliographer, T. D. Seymour Basset. 2 vols.: Princeton, Vols. I and II together, $17.50; separately, $10.

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The Passing of La Prensa

DEFENSE OF FREEDOM. By the Editors of La Prensa. John Day. $4.

By LULU VARGAS-VILA

IT is evident from the outset that the authors of this ususual book are masters of the art of reporting. *Defense of Freedom* is a faithful and moving presentation of facts—events which led to the crushing of a newspaper which had become a symbol during the eighty-odd years of its existence, and which had earned the reputation of being one of the leading organs of public opinion in the world. Most important of all, to anyone familiar with the political life of Argentina during the past decade the book offers a dramatic record of the incredible chain of circumstances which have placed a progressive, wealthy and freedom-loving nation under the dubious shadows of a totalitarian regime which masquerades in the guise of a democratic government.

The editors of *La Prensa* are to be commended for the objective, dispassionate manner in which they present their case, abstaining throughout from name-calling, which would be easily understandable. This is a significant, sobering volume, incontrovertible evidence against a political creed, or rather a political disease, generally fatal to its victims. Yet the book is never ponderous. Its central thesis is clearly and forcefully stated and developed: "The defense of freedom of the press, is the defense of freedom for the people." *La Prensa* is in an authoritative position so to speak, for it was born when Argentina emerged from the bloody regime of another strong man, Juan Manuel de Rosas, and prospered and grew in stature as the country itself earned a respected place among the democratic nations.

The book is divided into two parts. The first is a stirring and powerful chronicle of the slow relentless progress of persecution—against Man's ideas and ideals; the second, a series of inspired editorials from the pages of *La Prensa* during the past ten years, sounds the cry of alarm and calls on the people to defend their freedom against this insidious encroachment.

La Prensa, persecuted because it dared to champion the cause of freedom, has not been the only victim; hundreds of other publications have been silenced, but its destruction is momentuous because it stood as a bulwark in a restless hemisphere.

The narrative is gripping because truth is indeed stranger than fiction. The characters are a People, and their struggle for freedom transcends the documents and quotations through which the facts are presented. When the authorities finally closed in on *La Prensa* and its local employees resisted, peacefully and lawfully, they were attacked, wounded, and one of them lost his life. The free world was indignant, flags flew at half mast over the newspaper offices of this hemisphere—but to what avail?

The editor of the once great daily

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is in exile. His paper, the paper which had withstood so many sieges, is dead. Only a ghost which mockingly calls itself *La Prensa* stalks a gallant, proud land.

Quiet Horror

THE CLOSEST KIN THERE IS. By Clara Winston. Harcourt Brace. $3.

By T. E. CASSIDY

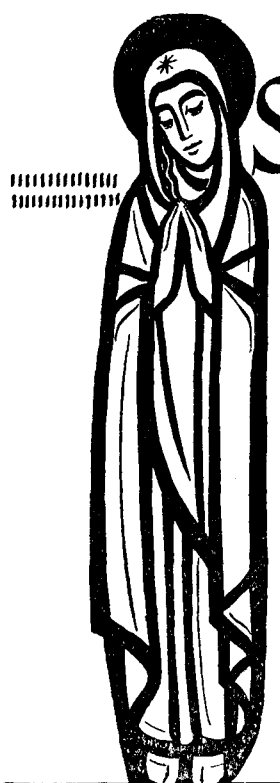
THE arresting title of this book suggests at once that here might be a story of deep and important family conflict. The novel is more than that: it is a dramatic, powerful but always simple unfolding of intense and twisted passions. It is something of a fictional event, for Clara Winston, in her first novel, has traveled far into the forest of human misery and despair, and has emerged with an absolutely tender and moving tale of farmfolk trapped in the horror of incest. ("The sin was planted so close to the rootstocks of their two lives that all three had grown together. Like the smother of wild grape binding together two apple trees.") The horror is not overdone; it is quietly there. It does not overwhelm the reader, nor is the reader overly conscious of anything sordid.

This horror stirs compassion and sympathy. It is so pervasive that the reader forgets the rough edges in the writing and concentrates almost unwillingly on the inevitable arrival of total calamity.

Phyllis Dary returns to her home, a remote New England farm, after an absence of six years in Boston. She returns because her father asked her to return. She finds herself a stranger, her mother a stranger, and her brother, Lloyd, even more of a stranger. Some time passes—her father is taken to an insane asylum; her mother, working in the woods with her brother, breaks her hip and and goes to a hospital. Phyllis stays at home from her schoolteacher job to help out, and she and Lloyd find themselves alone, and proceed to their doom. The mother returns, takes over the direction of her son's life again, and eventually finds him a mate because Phyllis asks her to do so. Phyllis drives off to school the day after the wedding, and the book crashes to a climax of classic tragic tone. That is the story, in its barest outline.

But that is not the only story of the book. There is a story here that will strike many as grim, some as squalid, others as melodramatic, and still others as a curious perversion of the Oedipus theme. Because just as much as it is the story of an unnatural relationship between brother and sister, it is also the story of mother and son in an unnatural fixation, one on the other. And it is the story of both women involved, especially the mother, in keeping the son out of war.

There is, too, the story of how farm people in the distant and far places from the towns manage to survive and even prosper, according to their own standards. The ways of life among these people are complex, yet they appear to be simple. Pa, though he is a pyromaniac, means no harm to any man. And Mother, though she never wants to



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cut the cord, is a sympathetic character. In fact, she is the heroine. Phyllis is the victim. Lloyd is caught between them. They are all caught in the web of region, gossip, and fear. It is all a very strange and frequently stirring mixture.

You get the idea every now and again that this book should be much longer. There are episodes which seem to finish too swiftly. There are characters who seem to be unfinished. But this author can write. Some of the passages are in the grand tradition of simple, moving, effective fiction. As a whole, it is a work that may well capture and hold an audience for the next book by Clara Winston.

In Praise of Puccini

IMMORTAL BOHEMIAN: An Intimate Memoir of Giacomo Puccini. By Dante del Fiorentino. Prentice-Hall. $3.50.

By E. V. R. WYATT

IT was in World War I that a young Italian priest called Fiorentino was offered two weeks' leave by the Colonel of his regiment if he could convince the Austrians of an occupied village that the Italians were friendly. A few nights later, Father Fiorentino climbed the fence of the most prominent citizen and commenced singing arias from *La Tosca*. First a light appeared in an upper window then, after "O dolci mani," the door was opened. Next day, the Colonel and his staff were invited for coffee. It confirmed Father Dante's faith in Puccini.

For three generations, the Puccini's had been renowned as musicians in Lucca, and when Donna Albina Puccini was left a penniless widow with eight children she so firmly believed in the genius of Giacomo that she sent an appeal written in homemade scarlet ink to Queen Margarita which resulted in a modest scholarship at the Conservatory in Milan. Four years later, Puccini's opera failed to win the coveted prize. He crept home. "Back to Milan," cried Donna Albina and, sure enough, within three months, at the suggestion of Boito, *Le Villi* was

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given a performance and Puccini won acclaim. But when he brought his laurel wreath back to his mother, she lay dying. He never loved any other woman so faithfully.

It may seem incongruous for a priest to write with a glow of a man who eloped with a friend's wife and then gave her full cause for jealousy for the rest of their lives, but Father Fiorentino like the other Lucchesi loved the musician and the gift God had given him. It was Puccini who gave Fiorentino, then a seminarian, the nickname of "Gonnellino"—Big Skirt. They remained loyal friends. After a long sojourn in the purgatory of a throat cancer, Puccini died blessed by the healing grace of the sacraments. When his body was brought back to Torre del Lago, a public notice was posted: "The great one will pass for the last time along the road that leads to the lake. His spirit, here present, vibrates like David's harp. . . . It is not a funeral which passes. Giacomo Puccini is not dead." Just as unconscious in its poetry, this book, so full of charm and Tuscany, is generous in humor.

Second Conversion

THE FURTHER JOURNEY. By Rosalind Murray. David McKay. $2.75

By JAMES F. KITTLESON

THIS book cannot be called autobiographical in the ordinary sense. We must borrow Eric Gill's word, "autopsychography," to describe it rightly. If *The Further Journey* were a personal history of an even mildly adventurous life, it would be far more readable. Miss Murray's account of her "second conversion," of her full passage to the other side of the apparent "iron curtain" of Catholicism, emerges a placidly written essay on the deepest meaning of the Christian *metanoia* as it has developed in her own soul and consciousness. She has written a meditation on the struggles of the intellectual convert to realize the complete otherness of Christian life —the *ontological* difference of it from grace-less existence in a human world.

For so small a book, *The Further Journey* seems interminably long. Following the difficult process of Miss Murray's reasoning it is possible to become exhausted by the sheer weight of her prose. Even so, she triumphs brilliantly. The total effect of her penetrating discussion of goodness, the meaning of the Incarnation, and the paradox of Justice and Charity is a renewed vision of the Faith. In considering the imponderables of Catholicism, Miss Murray has cast considerable light on the psychology of conversion.

REVIEWERS

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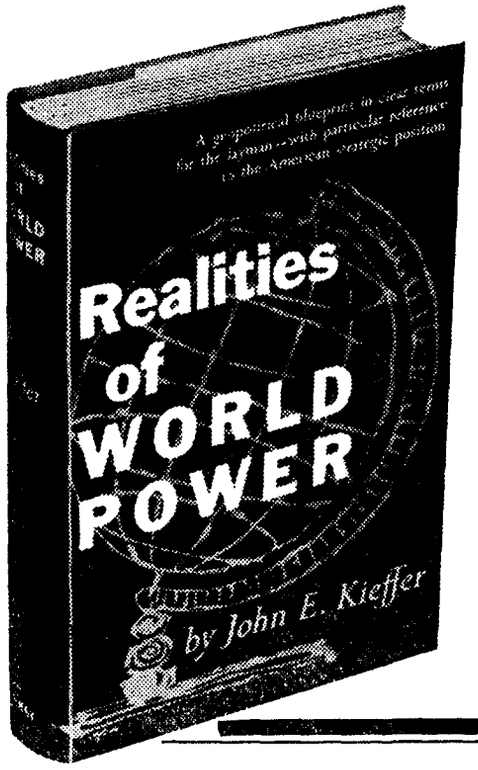

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